

**Theatre and Media Arts Department History Project 2011**

**Transcribed interview of Marion Bentley on July 19 2011**

**Interviewed by Harold Oaks**

**This is the interview with Marion Bentley on July 19, 2011. Marion, tell us about where you were born and raised.**

I was born in St. George on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October, 1928. I was reared in St. George and so I attended the local schools St. George Elementary; then Woodward High and that was when they had a 422 sequence like California. And so Woodward is the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grades and then Dixie High School was over with Dixie Jr. College. I went there from 1944-46. In 1946, I graduated from Dixie High School and then from Dixie College in 1948. I attended the University of Utah from 1948-50 and got my bachelor's degree there. I received Henry Newell scholarship to Stanford so I got my MA there in 1957. In the mean time, I had gone into the Air Force, gone out of the Air Force, and back.

**How long were you in the Air Force?**

I guess it was about two years. I actually thought I would be drafted. But the woman who was in charge of the draft thought I should go into the Air Force. I was recruited and it was interesting because I got in and then I applied for OCS and I went into radar school in Mississippi. Then I got into OCS and graduated. I wasn't going to enlist because I'd rather be in there for two years instead of four years. It turned out in a very interesting way. Jeff Holland is my nephew, so I took a couple of his sons on a vacation trip and got back to my assignment in Phoenix. They had been having a cut back, so they eliminated all of the people with inefficient ratings. They offered me a permanent commission as a regular Air Force, which I wasn't excited to take. They finally gave us the option of signing up permanently or taking an immediate discharge.

I ended up getting out in about two years exactly and I was pleased to get out. When we were doing this tour of the northwest, I stopped by an Air Force base in California, just out of Sacramento. I talked to them and they said, "You know we'd like to have you here, would you be interested?" And I said, "I'd be interested, but I don't want another assignment because I'm happy with what I have." But when I got back and I had a name request for me to go to Hondo, Texas. I think they were playing games with me. I was released at that time so I went right back to school.

I finished at Stanford and I was still working on my thesis for a while when they offered me a position at Dixie College, so I went there and finished my thesis. After that, I went east

looking for another university. I went back to the University of Utah because they had what I really wanted. Stanford would have really liked me to continue there, but I felt a lot of people sort of "ivory-towerish" as they had moved on. I really wanted to be a <sup>director</sup> ~~direction~~, so I stayed with that. I finished my PhD at the University of Utah and I had my teaching experience at Dixie.

**Now was that under Kenneth Angar?**

Yes, it started with Lowalee. When I decided to leave Dixie, Lowalee had just given up a job at Pasadena Playhouse and they hired him at Rutgers. They wanted to start an arch theatre there and he asked me to go with him. We went with the idea of building a major center on campus and they built a \$3 million theatre in New York and use the actors from around there. It was about three or four years after we left that they established it in New Brunswick. We went through design after design after design trying to do the theatre that we were going to do in New York. While we were there, we did a model Sadie's project. We did a lot of ground work and I think it helped to facilitate it later on. I finished at Dixie in 1968 and then went to Rutgers for three years, and then came back and taught at BYU for thirty-three years.

**Did you come to BYU right after your finished your doctorate?**

I finished my doctorate in 1968 and that was at the U., and then I went immediately to Rutgers. I taught at Rutgers for three years.

I was the artistic director in the summer and worked as a faculty for 3 years. I came to BYU in September 1971, where I was hired in the Honors Program.

Bruce Hafen is a good friend of mine, and a former student. He had joined the faculty and just finished his law degree at the University of Utah. When they had hired Dallin Oaks, Dallin had wanted Bruce as his assistant but Bruce had been working for President Wilkinson, designing the law school.

Bruce contacted me because they wanted me to work in the Honors Program, which Terry Warner was directing. I interviewed and they hired me immediately and I became the directorate of the Honors Program. I was in charge of the Independent Learning Experience and we redid the whole education program.

The Honors Program had been designed by Bob Thomas who was still there, but he appointed Terry as his director. The director usually consisted of three to five people. I had students that worked under me and it was a very individualized program. ILE was a culminating project that the students all were expected to do individually. It was like a minor

thesis of sorts that they would do. The program is very flexible and we were allowed to design an individual program for the people that had no structure. We had people interested in film but there was no film program so we put together whatever we wanted. It was a great opportunity.

The students I worked with were terrific and one of the students I worked with later became Academic Vice-president for a number of years. It was a very stimulating program. A friend of mine had invited me to do a study abroad in London. I had to get out of all my GE's, but it was a good opportunity selecting who was going to teach in the Honors Program, which I supervised.

### **When was that Study Abroad?**

My years are a little vague, but we went in 1985 the first time and we went in 1992 the second. The first time we were going to go, my son was elected Student Body President of Provo High School, so we didn't end up going. But we did go in 1985 and we were there a year after *Les Misérables* opened. We were at a study abroad there and when we came back, they moved me over to the Theatre Department. I went full-time theatre at that point, but I never did give up the GE project. It was Dallin who really suggested the re-vamping of the GE program.

We established a committee under Terry Warner. This was a sort of select committee where they were brain-storming everything and investigating a number of programs that were underway. There was one program up in the Northwest that we looked at that was doing sort of an examination program so people that had a background could take a challenge exam and get credit. We explored this and we did a lot of experimentation in the Honors Program. We were experimenting with groups, you know, three or four people. They were sort of workshops that get people together - sometimes it was collateral fields and sometimes it was totally different fields.

We were doing a lot of basic education exploration and I recall a syllabus I was working on with May Blanch who was in literature. We rotated some people in from Humanities or Sociology but we were most successful when we had a woman in Family Relations. She had a whole series of readings on family relationships. May had novels she had selected, I did the Theatre and we combined this as a seminar. The readings were all related to Sociology. It was very successful and continued to be taught until May died just a year or two ago. She was teaching up until about two years before she passed away. I have some of the student evaluations at the end and the students would say it was a horrible reading program and all of the papers besides. But they said we couldn't cut any of the words - you have to teach it all.

*Worked with Honors Program*

I continued to work with General Education and it was an uphill battle because anyone that had been working there a while had their own trough that they had been in and were very happy in and saw no reason to change. They resented these brilliant minds who were telling them how to run the program. Everybody told them they should teach Driver's Education and how to write a check and other basic parts of general education. I was on the offensive, especially when they sent me around as the Public Relations representative. I was a frequent visitor with the English program because I knew most of those people so they didn't throw things at me. We really had a very good program going. We had done a number of interesting things.

Some of these things didn't get done, but Walter Gong's son was there as a part of the Honors Program when we were having a tough time with forum devotionals. They went through a series of programs where they would try and take roll and give credit to those who attended. Walter had what we thought was a brilliant program. We taught this through the required English classes. We had a way of tracking attendance, so we had the attendance. We felt that Walter's program was a way for students to hear the lecture and capture the main concept lecturers were trying to get across. It was a wonderful - the students very actively listened to what the speaker had to say and they were reasoning out how it was supported. It was brilliant.

As we were going along the third year Jeff, my nephew, was appointed President. He told me there was so much opposition to the new GE program that they were just going to table it for the time being, which was unfortunate because we were barely getting feedback that it was working brilliantly.

After that, I was strictly in the Theatre Department, but I continued to maintain contact and regularly taught an Honors class. They also started some other programs that I wasn't directly involved with. While we were there, we would have lunch in the lunch hall, and then we'd go to the theatre. I typically was doing an Honors Theatre class in all my years there.

### **What other classes did you teach when you moved over to theatre?**

I taught acting—sometimes beginning, sometimes intermediate. I taught voice and diction. I taught dialects; I taught directing. I guess those were the main courses. I have a good background in phonetics and I thought they absolutely had to have phonetics. We were always revising the program. There was never enough space for another class. I put together a kind of phonetics base that I could put in the Mad Lab in the library and on the internet so we could get that foundation. I know when Mac taught the choir, whenever he taught a

song, he had it all written on the board in phonetics. I thought that was great and that we should learn that ourselves.

I had an interesting time because they asked me to direct *Tauska*. I thought it was absolutely fascinating because you have that whole scene where they killed Tauska and it was all musical. I thought it was fantastic because we can block this by the beat. We could pick up a lot from what the vocal people do. I had most of the voice and diction classes. Most of the people who taught these were supposed to have a basis in phonetics because they had to teach the fundamentals because you can't teach diction without knowing phonetics. We found out that people who had not had phonetics would get through without teaching. We tried coordinating that so they would get it. We taught the only phonetics class. I had Stephanie Breinholt as an assistant and I got her well-skilled. When I left, she took over the classes.

Dialects was an upper level acting class, so we combined it with Advanced Acting and tried to do far more than you can do. We did about five or six dialects, but we had two weeks on a dialect. We did a lot of it with phonetics and tapes. They would submit tapes with a written sheet and the phonetic changes made in whatever dialect it was. We would have conversations with the dialect, and we would have performance and grading on that. We had a whole sequence to introduce the dialect changes and tapes they could listen to from the library regularly, so they got used to hearing that. They got a little mechanical so we would have conversation to loosen that up. You have a general kind of conglomeration. If they can sense the rhythm, it works well.

#### **Did you work as a dialect coach for any productions done?**

I tried to encourage them. When I was at the Royal Academy in London, I did my dissertation on Acting Training. One of the most brilliant classes was Improvisation. A woman had an accompanist who played music and they would have to improvise as an assignment with an objective. They would go through and be able to have each person have three gestures, and create a mood with this music.

It was brilliant, some of the things that came through with just music and mime. Another class that I thought was very interesting: Coaching of Productions. They have people supervising every stage of a person's progress 'til they are through. Usually, the critic comes to a dress rehearsal and they tell people if their stage diction or dialect is bad, and they pull them into a workshop.

I suggested we do that same thing. I saw students I had for a semester who were doing an acceptable job, but nobody is on their back after. I had people graduating with terrible

diction. They never got that structured, but I always thought we ought to be responsible for people who are finally there and graduating. We need to know if they are going to be successful. Tim Threlfall's daughter was in my Voice and Diction class and I felt bad because I gave her a B, maybe a B-. I was generous, though. Her diction was not great. We were always re-vamping the program and trying to master everything. Everything was always undergoing a process of change.

It was interesting as we tried a number of things. I spent more time at the Royal Academy than at any school, and in Lamden, and Webber Douglas, which was particularly focused on musical theatre. They thought after two full years of training, they maybe can trust one scene to an actor. It would have been horrified if students had no training at all. They had the freedom to bring people in. They had Alec McAllen, who was playing in the west end at the time. He did a workshop on comedy, and had frequent presentations with current people in the business, which was helpful and useful. They had the flexibility to do other courses. That's one of the questions they asked me about in my PhD. I told them the value is that is that nobody is ever secure in the job, and sometimes you do get people who are, and it is hard in the university program to get rid of anybody. That's one of the virtues and vices. You get people who are there and people who come to study with those people. There are pros and cons. The advantage is that they can pull people out of nowhere and use them in practical terms. I think people in the business love to have some contact back and forth.

#### **How long were you in London during that time?**

I was there for an entire year and they were very gracious to me. The fellow in charge was from the Midwest in America, and he was in charge of the Royal Academy at that time. They had their own theatre and were doing their own productions. Wonderful program. They had people from Russia who were doing Russian techniques, I thought a very solid program but he said you don't want to pay tuition do you? I said, "Please, no," and so I got to go to anything I wanted. So I went and the women that was doing the improve class I never missed a class she taught.

There was a whole array of sophisticated classes. We went over in the summer and I was there year-round. Def Hanks was mission president at the time. While I was there, he said he wanted me to direct a production of *Promise Valley*, while we are there and use it for our proselyting program. Jeff was on his mission at the time, his parents were there on their mission, and we were there, it was great. We were year-round there and attending the ward where Nathan Tanner was at the time.

#### **Did you do it at the chapel...?**

We did, and Deanna designed it, it was amazing because it cost a fortune to create a set – they had to import lumber, and everything was so expensive. He told me could use his leads. His lead was a student at the Royal Academy of Music, who looked like he was 17. The leading lady he had picked was his cook from the mission home, who was 50. I told him this wasn't going to work.

We had taken the summer to spend all of our time on the continent. When we got to Paris, they were doing *Promise Valley* (everybody was doing *Promise Valley...*) and we went and it turned out that the lead was a friend of Deanna's from White Key. It was so fun because we were in this French audience and everyone would kiss everybody, when it came to sitting down. We saw it there and we talked to President Hanks, and told him there was a girl in Paris who had just done that show. He arranged to get her mission changed from Paris and she was suddenly a missionary in London for two or three weeks.

Benjamin Britton, was putting together a small company that was going on tour in Paris for two months, so our music director talked to the guy who was playing the lead (not Benjamin Britton), and he said he would love to do that, so he played the male lead, since the student didn't have time to do it anyway. Poor Duff Hanks.

These missionaries would come in at 2:00 in the afternoon playing basketball to make sure they weren't late for rehearsal at 8:00. Three years of babysitting is enough for anybody, but he had people who were very stalwart members of the church and they had just re-vamped the transportation system. It was very expensive to be on the train, so he decided to come up with money for people who had to travel on the train in order to get here to rehearse. It was a real testimony builder because we didn't know what we were doing and we weren't familiar with what was happening there.

But, how do we come up with Indians? It ended up that at the Air Force base there was an officer who was an Indian lover and he had people doing Indian dances, so we were able to capitalize on that.

Then, I had to face with what to do at dress rehearsal. We had a family of kids and I said, "Well, I guess it will work out." It turned out our dress rehearsal dates were vacation time, so the children were available. We went on schedule as if we planned it. We did it very successfully.

#### **When did you get married?**

I got married in 1961 and it was the first year in St. George. When I started teaching at Dixie in 1954, I was hired as head of the English department. Myrtle Henderson was there teaching theatre and she was doing a major production and some one-acts. Arthur Burns

asked if I wanted to do an opera or an operetta. I told him no, but I would like to do a musical. He said, "We'll give you \$200."

Myrtle was irate that I had been given that opportunity and \$200. We did *Kiss Me Kate*, and our stage was 20x20 ft. It was about back here with a curtain and a studded drop off. They had a four-foot wing-space on this side, six-foot wing-space on this side. We did a full-scale musical with all the drops in the scene, so we did *Kiss Me Kate*.

Then the next year we did *Brigadoon*, and they gave me Hack Shurtleff who was a retired painter from Paramount who would come to do *Mormon Girl*, which he had written for tourists, but it never worked out successfully. President Burndt hired him to help me with the scenery. If you know *Brigadoon*, you have to do a scrim. We couldn't afford a scrim, so I said "Why not use burlap?"

We ended up using burlap and he had to paint in dye. It wasn't brilliant but you could see through the scrim. We did *Brigadoon* and invited the high schools to the dress rehearsals. I was in the back of the auditorium and they had a problem in the early dress rehearsal. The curtain would open and break and that was it. I talked to the custodian and told him to be sure that was fixed since we were starting a run. I was sitting there and the thing opened and the person crawled over to me and whispered that the curtain was broken. I had to go searching through campus to find the custodian, who was sort of the pot-kettle type. I found him in the science building, and wasn't surprised when I told him it broke – he said he thought it might.

I went racing back, and by that time, they were standing shoulder on shoulder, and they did it, without the help of the custodian. We did a number of seasons there and in 1961, we moved to the new Fine Arts Center, and that has since been destroyed and they have a new state of the art building.

#### **What productions do you remember directing at BYU?**

I have copies of most of those, and I have a niece who does VHS to DVD, so I have most of those plays, as well as musicals, on file. I did *My Fair Lady*, *The Member of the Wedding* (that was a favorite of mine with Bob Milton's daughter in it). I did two Alan Ayckbourn plays, *Anything Goes*. I think you were in charge then, or maybe Eric? That tells you about my judgment, I guess.

We did it and had a good time doing it. The Dean's secretary one time said she would pay \$100 to see that show again. I had Atkins Pace, a friend of mine, doing sets. It was fun. I did *Merry Widow*, which I enjoyed doing. We double cast the opera people.

They ask about when I was hired—I was under the direction of Dr. Seelo Lees. I started to put down students also, like Marilyn Robinson who was Ms. Utah and later the Department Chair, and Colleen Hutchins, who was Ms. America, H.E.D. Redford, and Dave Morgan. Doc had a decor of people – he tried to move out of the repertory system. I don't suppose they aren't interested in names not from BYU, though. Bob Thomas was the academic Vice-president. I was very involved academically—I was the closest we got to a Dean at Dixie.

I was involved with the Utah Theatre Association, so I tried doing a lot of interacting with the high schools, and was usually involved with judging auditions every year. It was part of the liaison work I did. I keep remembering about people who were here in the department. Lorin Wheelwright, Lael Woodbury, Newell Dayley, Bruce Christensen, James Mason, and Stephen Jones were Deans. Charles Metten, Harold Oaks, Eric Fielding, Bob Nelson. I served on the General Education Committee until it was dissolved when Elder Holland became president. I can't think of any theatres besides the de Jong and Pardoe.

You directed in every theatre, you know. I took a show to the Utah Theatre when it was held at SUU in Cedar City. It was the one Karl Pope designed, and I used slides in the back. The show was about a guy coming to Morocco and the whole thing about America.

It was one of the best he did for me. Karl learned how to deal with me. When we did the opera, *Hansel and Gretel*, I wanted to have the lights in a way that made it look like we had angel figures coming down every time it was aimed at the floor. He said, "Would you like more of that?" I told him that would be great, but nothing was ever done. I said my piece, I guess. I would have liked it.

#### When did you retire?

I retired in 2002.

#### What facilities did you use?

I don't remember where we had the Mask Club, but we did have the Arena and Experimental Theatres, and I directed in both of those places. I took this to the festival in SUU and that is when the *Hello Dolly* original lead came. It was a terrific show. Marci was in it and Martin, who was a Dance major. It was six-member cast and it was fun. It had a sweep of fun and a whole history. I told them the vaudeville acts were too silly, but the cast wanted to do them. It was a hit of the show.

We talked about the foundation of phonetics. When I left, we still had a basic program that worked with the phonetics class. We used the textbook that is out of print now, and he was not great with dialogue. It was useful because he goes through the phonetic changes with

each dialect. You get to hear and then read them. We made that available in the library, so they could hear it again. We also did our own version in the Mad Lab, and it may still be there. We hadn't been technologically significant like when we retired, but it may have been a good thing. I don't think I could have had individual contact with everybody through the computer. It was a great step progress.

When Don Marshall retired, he was determined the computer was going to destroy education. He wasn't any more skilled it than I was. We were always redoing the curriculum and revising. We learned things in the process, but it was always moving along technologically. I guess there were advances.

I have to talk about some of the things we did when I was in charge of General Education. I was still functioning pretty much in that central role but we did a lot. We made available to people significant ways to improve testing. We invited departments to submit their test to the testing office and we'd have them work on it. Biological Sciences regularly met to review questions and figure out what to improve. We were improving testing ability. We were trying to provide an opportunity for people who had the background to test out and get credit. It sped up the process. We get hung up here at the University with people who are advanced and so this improved their time. Teachers complained because the test wouldn't do it; there had to be an essay. They were able to improve the essay questions to get them more focused.

A lot of significant changes were made. People complained about teaching to a test. The family and fiction that we taught, we really did have essay questions. The thing we discovered when we surveyed was the time it took people to take the test was about a half-hour to an hour and a half. I had an office with a guy who taught some agricultural class and he told lots of grating stories. That was what was most significant—even those who resisted what we were trying to do benefited from it. Some people in class think they know everything and they are just deterrent.

So those technological things were useful. I felt that the performance things were all very good and we tried to incorporate that with a critique of acting skills, as well. What we were giving was the Dialect class with a generic dialect. With Britain, you have twenty-five dialects. When they get in and do a diagnostic, they make you analyze every mistake you made, and correct it. That's why you can understand them on stage.

We had a student doing a British accent—we couldn't understand him, and the British couldn't understand them. There are so many dialects like that. Anyway, we do what we call generic, so it can work for you. With Irish, if you are in Dublin, who knows how many dialect:

there are! I would occasionally get people from there, and ask what kind of Irish. We thought we were doing well with *having* an Irish dialect.

I think we tried to get them an opportunity to hear. When we had people available locally, we would bring them in. I worked for a German lady in charge of the stake library, and we would record tapes. We tried to have a library of sources of particular dialects, but we recognize the people who bring a dialect also bring their personal accent into it. They aren't really reflective of the total picture, as is ideal.

#### **Do you have a current resume or vita?**

I was going to update this, but this would be useful for you to have. You can see I did it years ago. As far as public speeches go, I spoke at the Diamond Jubilee of Dixie College; I did a devotional/fireside in the vein of the same thing. I did a funeral service for the Vice-president of the Northwestern Association. I wrote the Presidential Citation for Duff Hanks when he was given an honorary degree. I gave a speech on Ralph Huntsman who was an artist at Dixie. Also a funeral address for Hafen's mother.

With every show I did, I put together a souvenir packet: a program, a note from me, photographs, everything. I think that's true with every show I have done since. I still put them together at the Tuacahn and I still have copies of those.

I'm trying to think of names of students who graduated...

Aaron Eckhart – I went to see him in London, with hordes of girls waiting for his autographs. Neil LaBoeuf – I still have contact with him. Mindy Smoot is doing phenomenal work in Sundance. I have a granddaughter she has been working with. Mindy was exactly what she needed. Addie liked to sing, but she decided to try out for chorus. She started studying, and this woman told her she had a unique quality and to continue. Since then she has blossomed. Addie is the highlight of Mindy's show. One of them is Amy Ive's niece. The other one is our Addie. The Shawn's daughter in the east was suddenly interested in singing. We told her to take advantage of every opportunity. The Law Society gives an award to an outstanding attorney in the profession in Rex Lee's name, and they give two scholarships in Shawn's name to students who are going into public policy.

After a couple of years, they decided to ask Shawn's daughters come and say nice things about their dad. About three years ago, they invited Katie and Samantha to go with their mom. They had a segment conducting that meeting. I went to Travis' grandfather, but Travis conducted the meeting. Lisa professionally, known as Lisa Hopkins, had just finished *La Boheme* and won a Tony. They were talking and Katie was interested in singing, and she said she had the right muscles and bones. She has been studying with her for two years. She said,

"You better plan on sending her to Julliard." It's amazing what's happening, but I don't think she'll go to Julliard.

David Tinney – I have been so thrilled with what he has done at both Hale Centers. He did *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, choreographed and starred in it. He was great and I thought, boy, they are beating out in everything they are doing. In the costumes, pacing, everything was so professional. You go over near the E-Center to go see *The Drowsy Chaperone*. It is an amazing theatre. They use it for perfection. I thought, "Boy, I am embarrassed at what we thought we were doing great with."

I think there are very exciting opportunities since we have the MDT program. Our people have a tremendous opportunity never had before. Now, they are taking the students to New York to audition. All the time I have been down there, I have depended on BYU. Now we are getting a lot of people from New York. We need to be sure not to ignore the home front. Otherwise, they will not audition if we outsource from New York.

The girl they cast for *Annie* had the most unmusical voice I had ever had. She didn't even have vibrato going on. I wondered why they would cast somebody with that kind of voice in a musical. She did it on tour... but tour or not, it was a terrible voice. When I went back and saw it, the understudy was performing and she was great! Anyway, the opportunity to get seen is wonderful. People who are from there are also willing and happy to come here. The guy who played the New York Detective was named Weyland and he also did Sky Masterson the same year he did *Guys and Dolls* for me. He was back this year as Triton in *The Little Mermaid*. He also had another role in *Grease*. People come out here doing five week gigs and they do pretty well. Here they can go in until October 22 doing those two shows.

#### **They get audiences down there [at the Tuacahn]!**

The leading girl in *Mamma Mia* was doing well for many years and went up and did *South Pacific*, and it was one of the best things we've done down there. She was terrific. She was there doing stage management this year.

#### **What is your connection with Tuacahn?**

I'm on the board.

#### **How long have you been on the board?**

...Forever. The first thing I directed down there was *The King and I*. I think Tim [Threlfall] did *The Wizard of Oz* and I was down there on the board that year. I don't know. I can find out easily.

I directed *West Side Story* the year after I retired. They don't like the board to direct. They like us to raise money. I'm there every year and attend the meetings every year, even by telephone. I was on the board for the Utah Valley Symphony. I was on the board for John Clark, who was president of the symphony for a number of years. They like people on the board who have rich friends. Money raising is not my activity.

Actually they have kept calling me back down there because the alumni association in Dixie is phenomenal. They called Deanna here to come back to do her 60-year graduation anniversary. I thought, "Boy those people should do how they do things at Dixie." They will help you arrange a reunion, put together a program, they are just doing everything. Before the last two years, they were bringing people back for the "Golden Generation," fifty years since they had graduated. Lately, we have been bringing back the music from the musicals that played in the 14 years I was here. We had Shauna Cornelius, who did *My Fair Lady* down there and later married a Johnson fellow, who taught choir at UVU for a number of years. She and Rick Ott, who played the telephone boy came back and did *Sixteen Going on Seventeen* and *Sixty Going on Seventy*. It was fun. These people after 50 years are doing the same numbers they did before. There were at least five years we have had that going on. One of my scholars died last year. She had played the lead in *Oklahoma* and John Green played opposite her. He had a cousin with a terrific voice but it wasn't the right combination.

I think I have used more time than you had to spend.

**No, no. It's been wonderful to visit with you. What advice would you give?**

I think they are doing everything right in terms of what they are doing with the people in Musical Theatre. They are getting opportunities, they are getting seen, and they are getting trained. I feel they still need vocal work. Nearly every Shakespeare Company has a vocal expert. I lurched along doing what I could do with warm-ups and I attended a lot of workshops with voice work. Interestingly enough, Marilyn Robinson Holt was a student when I was there. She has had a sweet voice, and guts under what she was saying. I think we never have enough of that. Every cast needs a warm-up.

Bruce (Hafen) got season tickets to the U. for \$70, for seven productions. They are in the balcony, and I don't mind balcony seats. When I was at Rutgers, I could get balcony seats for \$2.50 or \$2.70, and now it is that much for the balcony. I was so out of patience with a girl who went to see a production and he had been directing that Greek play and he was on a talk show. The stupid girl said she didn't want to sit in the cheap seats. He would buy tickets for the high school students, and it really turned him off. Since then he has never given her free seats. Anyway, I thought it was a little different here because all the seats are pretty good and we don't need to sell any cheap seats. I thought, boy, theatre needs to be a habit.

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Doc was doing summer theatre, and then they started going to winter season and charging New York prices. Then they had a period where it got pretty lean and they reduced the prices. I thought having a consistent audience is really helpful. There are people who support no matter what we do, but we can't rely on that dedication since everyone is so busy. I like to know who is directing, and they stopped putting it on the posters.

**I noticed that too!**

Yeah. Anyway, I really think it is worth making a drive for that core audience but some people want to reduce the number of shows and increase the price.

**Thank you! You have done a fantastic job and you've had a very impressive career and I appreciate being able to visit with you.**